

Q&A: SOCIAL SECURITY AUDIT LETTERS

Q: *What is this letter all about? It sounds like a scam to me.*

A: It is not a scam, and you need to reply to this letter. The Social Security Administration is conducting a random spot check of people who have been authorized to receive Extra Help in paying for the Medicare Part D Benefit. The object is to make sure that those people who are truly eligible for Extra Help are the ones who receive it. A separate part of this process in-

volves sending out letters to people who are not currently receiving Extra Help, but are believed to be eligible for it.

Q: *Why did I get the letter and not everyone else? I didn't do anything wrong.*

A: Only a small percentage of people who applied for Extra Help receive this letter. They are chosen entirely by chance. Getting a letter does not mean that anyone believes you did something wrong.

Q: *They seem to want a lot of personal information, and that concerns me.*

A: In order to qualify for Extra Help, there are two tests that must be met: an income test, and an asset test. This spot check is to verify that you meet both tests. To do that, some personal information is required, as it was on the original application for Extra Help that you filled out.

None of this information needs to be sent in the mail. But it is important that you

provide this information to help us make sure that everyone deserving of Extra Help, gets it.

Q: *How do I make sure this is legitimate?*

A: You may contact the person who sent you the letter directly, at the toll-free number shown at the bottom of the first page of the letter. If you're still not sure after speaking with that person, you can call the Regional Office of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in Denver, at (303) 844-2111, or your local Social Security Office.

Continued on next page...

Welcome to the RxConnector newsletter!



This newsletter is designed to keep you up to date about the Prescription Connection for ND program and to keep you in the know about the various prescription assistance programs that are available. In addition, from time to time, we may also include other items of interest related to Medicare and the Senior Health Insurance Counseling (SHIC) program.

We've got a lot going on this month in both the SHIC and Prescription Connection for ND programs. We will have an outreach booth at the ND State Fair from July 21 to July 29 in Commercial II. We are looking for volunteers to help in our booth. If you are interested, please call our toll-free number.

Our booth will have information available regarding:

- Medicare
- Medicare Part D
- Medicare Advantage Plans
- Free and discounted prescriptions

As always, thanks for all your hard work for both the SHIC and Prescription Connection programs!

**Contact the
Department:**

**1.888.575.6611
insurance@nd.gov
www.state.nd.us/ndins**

**NORTH
DAKOTA**
a program of the
North Dakota
Insurance Department

**Prescription
Connection**
for North Dakota

Finally, you may choose to have a friend, relative, or legal representative join you on the telephone interview to make sure your interests are protected.

Q: What do I need to do?

A: First, send back the acknowledgement form in the

postage-paid envelope that came with the letter. If the appointment time is inconvenient, ask that it be rescheduled. You can also do that by phone.

Next, gather the information requested as well as you can. If more is needed, you can find that out during the phone interview.

Above all, do not ignore or throw away this letter. Doing so could mean that you lose the Extra Help in the Part D program you have already been approved for. Taking part in the interview will help us make sure that everyone who needs Extra Help is getting it, including you.

CHANGES TO MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE IN 2007

The final guidance from CMS allows plans to offer two plans next year with the requirement that at least one of the plans must provide coverage in the doughnut hole.

In 2007:

- Catastrophic coverage will kick in after \$5,451.25 of total drug spending by the drug plan and plan member.
- TROOP threshold on drug expenditures before reaching catastrophic coverage will be \$3,850 up from \$3,600.
- The deductible is increasing from \$250 to \$265.
- The initial coverage limit is increasing from \$2,250 to \$2,400
- People reaching catastrophic coverage will have copayments of \$2.15 for generics and \$5.35 for brand-name drugs
- People qualifying for Extra Help paying for their Part D costs will see their copayments go from \$1/\$3 for those receiving the full benefit and \$2/\$5 for those receiving the partial subsidy to \$1/\$3.10 and \$2.15/\$5.35, respectively.

Changes go into effect on January 1, 2007.

ABBOTT DIABETES CARE INC

The Abbott Diabetes Care Inc. Patient Assistance program is designed to assist financially disadvantaged individuals. All applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Eligibility is based on current Federal Poverty Guidelines adjusted for household size. Income guidelines are not disclosed by the program.

The following items are available through this program: (1) Freestyle Flash Meter blood glucose monitoring system, (2) Freestyle Meter blood glu-

cose monitoring system, and (3) Precision Xtra blood glucose & ketone monitoring system

The patient must have applied to Medicaid, been denied, have no prescription insurance and meet income guidelines. The patient must have no insurance that covers diabetes testing supplies. This program will provide one meter, strips and lancets for eligible patients for one year.

For more information call 1-866-972-7863 or 1-866-224-8887.

XUBEX

Xubex now charges \$30 for a 90 day supply, \$60 for a 180 day supply and \$120 for a 360 supply of class 2 medications. A list of these medications can be found at xubex.com

MEDICARE PHONE SCAMS—BE AWARE!

The ND Insurance Department recently issued a consumer warning that can be found at our website ~ <http://www.state.nd.us/ndins/communications/press-release.asp?PRID=91>.

If you have questions about this alert or know of someone who may have been affected by this scam or others like it, please contact the department.